

extraordinary loss and suffering across your continent and the world, and all governments have a moral obligation to confront it.

To help promote economic progress in Africa and elsewhere, the next budget I submit to Congress will include a 50-percent increase in our development assistance over the next 3 years. Money from our new Millennium Challenge Account will be directed to nations that encourage economic freedom, root out corruption, and respect the rights of their people. Through the New Partnership for African Development, many leaders across the continent have pledged their governments to these fundamental principles.

America has also created a special African Millennium Fund, administered by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. Through this fund, we will support the construction of roads and bridges, canals, and other basic infrastructure that help make economic growth possible.

Africa's future depends as well on good teachers and schools and a chance for every child to study and learn, so America is devoting an additional \$200 million over 5 years to improve basic education and teacher training in Africa. Thanks to the leadership of Andrew Natsios, Administrator of our Agency of International Development, we have also created the Books for a Better Tomorrow program. This public/private effort will, in the weeks to come, deliver \$30 million worth of books and other school supplies to Africa.

For many years, America and the world looked to the continent of Africa and saw only its problems. That era has passed. In this new century, the world is beginning to see the great potential of Africa and the goodness of its people.

Many of you gathered this week in Mauritius have helped to bring about this change. I share your confidence in Africa's future and in Africa's new generation of leaders. I pledge to you the friendship and support of the United States of America.

Thank you very much, and may God bless you all.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 4 p.m. on January 13 in the Library at the White House for later transmission to the forum meeting in Port Louis, Mauritius. The transcript was released by the Office of the

Press Secretary on January 15. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth of Mauritius.

Remarks on the Michigan Affirmative Action Case

January 15, 2003

The Supreme Court will soon hear arguments in a case about admissions policies and student diversity in public universities. I strongly support diversity of all kinds, including racial diversity in higher education. But the method used by the University of Michigan to achieve this important goal is fundamentally flawed.

At their core, the Michigan policies amount to a quota system that unfairly rewards or penalizes prospective students, based solely on their race. So tomorrow my administration will file a brief with the Court arguing that the University of Michigan's admissions policies, which award students a significant number of extra points based solely on their race and establishes numerical targets for incoming minority students, are unconstitutional.

Our Constitution makes it clear that people of all races must be treated equally under the law. Yet we know that our society has not fully achieved that ideal. Racial prejudice is a reality in America. It hurts many of our citizens. As a nation, as a government, and as individuals, we must be vigilant in responding to prejudice wherever we find it. Yet, as we work to address the wrong of racial prejudice, we must not use means that create another wrong and thus perpetuate our divisions.

America is a diverse country, racially, economically, and ethnically. And our institutions of higher education should reflect our diversity. A college education should teach respect and understanding and good will. And these values are strengthened when students live and learn with people from many backgrounds. Yet quota systems that use race to include or exclude people from higher education and the opportunities it offers are divisive, unfair, and impossible to square with the Constitution.

In the programs under review by the Supreme Court, the University of Michigan has

established an admissions process based on race. At the undergraduate level, African American students and some Hispanic students and Native American students receive 20 points out of a maximum of 150, not because of any academic achievement or life experience but solely because they are African American, Hispanic, or Native American.

To put this in perspective, a perfect SAT score is worth only 12 points in the Michigan system. Students who accumulate 100 points are generally admitted, so those 20 points awarded solely based on race are often the decisive factor.

At the law school, some minority students are admitted to meet percentage targets, while other applicants with higher grades and better scores are passed over. This means that students are being selected or rejected based primarily on the color of their skin. The motivation for such an admissions policy may be very good, but its result is discrimination, and that discrimination is wrong.

Some States are using innovative ways to diversify their student bodies. Recent history has proven that diversity can be achieved without using quotas. Systems in California and Florida and Texas have proven that by guaranteeing admissions to the top students from high schools throughout the State, including low-income neighborhoods, colleges can attain broad racial diversity. In these States, race-neutral admissions policies have resulted in levels of minority attendance for incoming students that are close to and in some instances slightly surpass those under the old race-based approach.

We should not be satisfied with the current numbers of minorities on Americans' college campuses. Much progress has been made. Much more is needed. University officials have the responsibility and the obligation to make a serious, effective effort to reach out to students from all walks of life without falling back on unconstitutional quotas. Schools should seek diversity by considering a broad range of factors in admissions, including a student's potential and life experiences.

Our Government must work to make college more affordable for students who come from economically disadvantaged homes. And because we're committed to racial jus-

tice, we must make sure that America's public schools offer a quality education to every child from every background, which is the central purpose of the education reforms I signed last year.

America's long experience with the segregation we have put behind us and the racial discrimination we still struggle to overcome requires a special effort to make real the promise of equal opportunity for all. My administration will continue to actively promote diversity and opportunity in every way that the law permits.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:30 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to two related cases before the Supreme Court, *Barbara Grutter, Petitioner v. Lee Bollinger, et al* and *Jennifer Gratz and Patrick Hamacker, Petitioners v. Lee Bollinger, et al*. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Proclamation 7640—Religious Freedom Day, 2003

January 15, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Each year on January 16, we celebrate Religious Freedom Day in commemoration of the passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom by the Virginia General Assembly, which occurred on this day in 1786. Drafted by Thomas Jefferson, this historic law provided the inspiration and the framework for the religious freedom clauses in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

The religious freedom provisions of our Constitution—the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause—open the first of the ten amendments that make up the Bill of Rights. Because the Framers placed the guarantee of religious freedom before other cherished rights, religious liberty in America is often called the first freedom. The right to have religious beliefs and to freely practice such beliefs are among the most fundamental freedoms we possess. James Madison once